

# INDUSTRY ANALYSTS HELP DISCOVER EXPORTING OPPORTUNITIES

by Office of Export Promotion and Coordination,  
*Trade Development*

While the nation mourns the loss of loved ones brought on by the tragedies of September 11, 2001, it must also come to terms with the economic shock currently rippling through virtually all industries and regions. The overall U.S. economy, however, remains sound and strong and the acts of terrorism need not continue to take their toll on our profits and revenues. As Linda Conlin, Assistant Secretary of Trade Development at ITA, states, "Now more

than ever, U.S. companies can rely on ITA's trade analysts to provide advice, thorough research, information and advocacy on the exporting potential of their products." Trade Development offers these services in a variety of ways.

## EXPORT COUNSELING

Companies looking to export can rely on the Trade Information Center (TIC) by calling 1-800-USA-TRAD(E), where they will receive free export information and advice as well as answers to technical questions on topics ranging from travel restrictions and government

services to customs and tariffs. TIC trade specialists can also give general advice on the latest situation in particular markets overseas. As the first stop for federal export assistance including commercial and economic conditions in Western Europe, Asia, the Western Hemisphere, Africa and the Near East, the TIC is a comprehensive resource for export information and provides counseling and referrals to thousands of businesses.

## EXPERTISE FROM INDUSTRY ANALYSTS

Trade Development's International Trade Analysts are industry sector specific experts that deal with trade analysis, policy and promotion of the products and services of the industry that they cover. Each analyst is thoroughly familiar with the industry with regard to what is being exported, the destination of those exports, as well as how those products or services are being exported. Specialists have years of experience in an industry specific sector and can draw on this experience to guide companies through the exporting process.

In an interview, one of Trade Development's Industry Specialist, Gary Stanley, Director of the Forest Products and Building Materials Division, discusses some of the many ways in which exporters can seek guidance.





### HOW DO I LOCATE THE INDUSTRY SPECIALIST FOR MY SECTOR?

There are a number of ways in which we can be contacted. The most efficient way still is by telephone. To locate the specialist covering your industry, visit [www.trade.gov/td](http://www.trade.gov/td) and search the directory by industry. The information given includes the name, telephone number and email address for each specialist. Businesses can also call the TIC if they are unsure of whom to contact.

Another way, obviously, for people to contact us is through our homepage. We receive a number of contacts directly from people sending us emails, asking for information. We've posted a number of initiatives on our website for people calling and looking for general information. The biggest one we're doing right now is the U.S./China Housing Initiative. We're doing a big conference in November and we've got a lot of people from industry from Housing and Urban Development and other agencies that are interested in this.



### WHAT CAN THE INDUSTRY SPECIALISTS DO TO HELP ME?

Ofentimes it depends on the degree of experience that the exporter himself may have. Some products have traditionally been traded in very large quantities by big multinationals or conglomerates that frankly need very little assistance from the U.S. Government. On the other hand, we have sectors that do need our help. Particularly over the past five to ten years, many of these have experienced pretty significant growth and we've been able to help these companies direct that growth to foreign markets. Companies can contact us and we'll do some industry analysis and trade flows to identify the best areas of the world where they could target their exports. A classic example of this is hardwood lumber. We would do a trade run using

Census statistics to determine where the best regions of the world are. We recommend targeting a region rather than an individual country in order to maximize a company's overseas promotional efforts. While working for a company, for instance, that would like to export to Latin America we wouldn't just say, "Go to Mexico." We would say, "What about Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Columbia and Venezuela." We would look at each one of those as prospects. We would do the same thing with Asia and offer within the context of that our analysis of where those prospects lie, including the end user segment, whether it's furniture, interior finishing for housing, or flooring or cabinetry. We can do additional research as well. We try to find out tariff information, import customs procedures, whether there is a value-added tax, what kind of licensing might be necessary, if it's something that could potentially involve a sanitary issue, for example.



### HOW DO I TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE PROSPECTS?

In order to follow through on the research we have provided to exporters, we use trade promotion events. Working closely with the National Association of Homebuilders, we have put together a conference in Shanghai this November under the auspices of the U.S./China Housing Initiative. In general terms, this will be an industry conference and exhibition where U.S. firms will have a chance to participate in this huge building show in Shanghai. We are assisting the association in putting together the conference, trying to get speakers from the Chinese government, from the embassy, perhaps get someone from our commercial service to come talk about the business and trade climate in the area. We'll try to get local end users like builders and purchasers of building materials to come and make presentations. We'll also work with our contacts at the American Chamber of Commerce over there in identifying particular areas.



### HOW ARE MY INDUSTRY INTERESTS REPRESENTED DURING TRADE NEGOTIATIONS?

We've done work with organizations such as the WTO and APEC. We worked specifically for three years with APEC on a Sectoral Liberalization Initiative. This included negotiations in areas of tariff and non-tariff barriers, standards, trade facilitation and economic and technical cooperation. We consulted with private industry during the negotiations and thereby worked on issues that they raised and areas where they felt markets needed to be opened.

We have three Industry Sector Advisory Committees in this division: building products, lumber and paper. Through these committees, we provide an opportunity for cleared industry advisors to advise the U.S. Government on trade negotiations and trade policy areas that the industry is interested in participating in. We provide the advisors with updates on what the current state of play is, discuss the U.S. Government's negotiating strategy and receive their advice.



### WHERE CAN I FIND INFORMATION ABOUT MY PRODUCTS?

Obviously the Internet is a great resource. We also have done a number of industry reports. In the past we have prepared chapters in the *U.S. Industry Trade Outlook*. That is an extremely popular reference source because it talks about current trends in the industry including what's happening in global as well as U.S. markets. ■